

September 8, 2005

John Tanner, Chief
Voting Section, Civil Rights Division,
Room 7254 - NWB
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Mr. Tanner:

This report is sent in response to the U.S. Department of Justice request for information regarding Wyoming's progress toward implementation of the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA).

Voting Systems:

Wyoming is scheduled to hold its first federal election in 2006 on August 22nd, which is a statewide primary election. It is anticipated that voting systems which meet the standards set forth in Section 301 of HAVA will be in place prior to January 1, 2006. The state is nearing the end of a process which has taken a number of months. In January '05 all voting equipment vendors which had equipment certified by National Association of State Election Directors (NASED) were invited to a vendor fair at which they could display equipment and make a presentation. Five vendors chose to attend. All twenty-three county clerks were represented at the event. Following this event, all county clerks determined which vendor could best meet their county's needs. Twenty counties chose Election Systems & Services (ES&S) and three counties, Carbon, Goshen and Laramie, chose Diebold Inc. In the few months following their selection, the state followed up with each company gathering information for due diligence. The state also obtained feedback from those individuals who had served on the state's Voting System Overview Committee as well as the state's primary groups representing the disability community. The state is now in contract negotiations with both companies. It is anticipated that the contract with ES&S will be completed before the end of September and equipment will be deployed, tested and paid for prior to December 15, 2005. There have been some difficulties in completing the contract with Diebold in large part due to turn over of staff in the company. However, it is still anticipated that the contract will be finalized soon and the equipment will be delivered prior to January 1, 2006. The twenty counties who selected ES&S equipment will use optical scan voting equipment and the AutoMark. The counties who chose Diebold will use optical scan equipment and the Diebold DRE. Both contracts when complete will be posted on the Secretary of State website and will be able to be accessed at soswy.state.wy.us/election/hava/hava.htm.

Computerized Statewide Voter Registration List:

Wyoming began the process of obtaining a statewide HAVA compliant voter registration list in March 2003. The Secretary of State appointed a Voter Registration Work Group, consisting of county clerks, county elections staff, county technology staff and Secretary of State employees. Four prominent vendors were invited to display their products to the Work Group and one vendor was contacted to explore the possibility of building a statewide system. Based upon the Work Group's review of products, the top two vendors were selected. After an attempt to contract with the first choice vendor did not come to reasonable resolution in August 2003, negotiations began with the next vendor who eventually obtained the contract. The state entered into a contract with Accenture e-Democracy services on February 27, 2004. The contract in its entirety is available on the Secretary of State's website at soswy.state.wy.us/election/hava/wyo-reg.htm. The state purchased a product called Elections Systems Manager (ESM), with an option to select a new product Accenture's Elections Systems Manager (AESM), if it chose to do so. The new product featuring .Net technology was demonstrated and accepted by the state in February 2004. Initially, the product was to be completed during the fall of 2004, with all counties being live on the system by July 2005. The product was developed with extensive functionality, however, and there were continuous time frame extensions. At present, the product, which has been purchased by Wyoming, Colorado and Wisconsin, is in system testing. It was anticipated that roll out to counties would begin on September 12, 2005 and the system would be live in all counties by December 18, 2005. However, just two weeks ago, the state, in conjunction with county clerk representatives, made the decision to not begin deployment to counties until the software had fewer bugs and was more stable. The new roll out schedule is still being negotiated, and it is now anticipated that the system will be live in all twenty-three counties by the end of February 2006.

The contract with Accenture is an end-to-end contract, meaning that Accenture will purchase and install equipment in all counties, will provide training for all county and state users, will host the software and database at a central location, will provide for a failover hosting site, will provide for all system security and will provide maintenance and help desk services through February 2009. All counties will use the same software. Data will be input at the county but will not be housed at the county. Rather, the data will be immediately transmitted via secure encryption utilizing Citrix Metaframe Client, via the Internet, to the central hosting site or, in case of an emergency, to the failover hosting site. In order to perform the required HAVA checks, the statewide database will interface with the Wyoming Department of Transportation, Division of Criminal Investigation, Board of Parole, and Department of Health Vital Records Services. The system will contain the name and registration information for each Wyoming voter, including a unique identifier for each voter. It will also meet the identification requirements under Section 303(b) of HAVA.

Appropriate documentation describing the development, design and operation of the database is contained in the contract (which is available at soswy.state.wy.us/election/hava/wyo-reg.htm) and in the requirements document attached.

Sincerely,

Joseph B. Meyer
Wyoming Secretary of State

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